

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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PUBLIC COMMENTS ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM ANALYZED

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today announced that copies are available upon request of an analysis it made of comments from the public on 26 proposals for future management of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Director Lynn A. Greenwalt of the Interior Department agency asked for public comments last March on his 26 proposed recommendations, which are only proposals, not final.

Copies of the analysis are available by writing the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Director Greenwalt's proposed recommendations took into account a report by a 10-member task force appointed by him in 1977 to come up with recommendations for the management of the Refuge System over the next 10 to 15 years.

The 26 recommendations cover every aspect of the management for the National Wildlife Refuge System--its mission, size, wildlife objectives and policies, public use, research, administration, and organization. Because of the importance and the complexity of the issues involved, a thorough analysis of the public comments received was conducted. The 386 refuges which make up the system constitute the world's most extensive network of lands managed for the benefit of wildlife. More than 30 million Americans visit national wildlife refuges each year for a variety of purposes including birdwatching, boating, fishing, hunting, photography, and wildlife observation.

The more than 2,000 comments summarized in this analysis will be considered by the Director before he makes his final recommendations to the Department. The comments themselves will also be available to the Department before charting the course of the Refuge System into the 1980's and 1990's.